

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 02728

FOR EUR/RPM

E.O.11652:XGDS-1  
TAGS: NATO, XA  
SUBJECT: NATO EXPERTS REPORT ON AFRICA SOUTH OF THE SAHARA

REF: USNATO A-54 OF MARCH 6, 1978

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1. REPAIR TRANSMITS TEXT OF NATO EXPERTS REPORT ON THE SITUATION IN AFRICA SOUTH OF THE SAHARA. THIS CABLE FORWARDS PROPOSED TALKING POINTS FOR THE AMBASSADOR'S USE WHEN THE REPORT IS REVIEWED BY THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL ON MARCH 22. ACTION REQUESTED: WE WOULD APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S COMMENTS ON THESE SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS AND HAVE FLAGGED THE NEED FOR UPDATING LANGUAGE ON SEVERAL ISSUES COVERED IN THE TALKING POINTS.

2. BEGIN TEXT OF DRAFT TALKING POINTS:

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--THIS SPRING'S EXPERTS REPORT ON AFRICA IS PERHAPS THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE ONE PRODUCED IN RECENT YEARS. I UNDERSTAND THIS REFLECTS THE CONCERN OF THE EXPERTS ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENTS ON THE CONTINENT, PARTICULARLY SOVIET AND CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN HOSTILITIES IN THE HORN OF AFRICA AND  
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ELSEWHERE. PARAGRAPH 47 INCLUDES DIFFERING OBSERVATIONS AS TO SOVIET MOTIVATIONS IN THIS CONNECTION AS WELL AS THE HOPEFUL VIEW THAT A GROWING NUMBER OF AFRICAN AND MOST OF THE ARAB COUNTRIES HAVE INCREASING RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE EFFECT OF SOVIET EXPANSION IN AFRICA. WE WOULD TEND TO SUPPORT THE LATTER VIEW, BUT WOULD UNDERLINE THAT THE THREAT TO FREE WORLD INTERESTS POSED BY COMMUNIST PENETRA-

TION PERMITS NO SCOPE FOR COMPLACENCY IN THIS REGARD.

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--IN PARAGRAPHS 42 AND 43 THE EXPERTS HAVE UNDERScored THE GROWING DISPOSITION OF THE SOVIET UNION TO PROVIDE ADVANCED MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO AFRICAN COUNTRIES, WHEREAS THE UNITED STATES HAS PREFERRED TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. THE UNITED STATES HAS MADE CLEAR TO THE SOVIET UNION ITS DESIRE FOR RESTRAINT IN THE TRANSFER OF ARMS TO AFRICAN STATES. THUS FAR, THE SOVIET UNION HAS NOT RESPONDED CONSTRUCTIVELY. SOVIET ARMS TRANSFER POLICY POSES A VERY SERIOUS QUESTION FOR ALL NATO MEMBERS, ONE WHICH MERITS SERIOUS DISCUSSION IN THIS FORUM.

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--AS SUGGESTED IN PARA 48 OF THE REPORT, WE BELIEVE WESTERN NATIONS MUST CONSIDER WAYS TO BE RESPONSIVE TO THE JUSTIFIED SECURITY CONCERNS OF A NUMBER OF FRIENDLY AFRICAN NATIONS, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME CONTINUING PRESENT LEVELS OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO AFRICA.

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--(PLEASE PROVIDE UPDATED OBSERVATIONS ON THE HORN.)

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--IN TAKING FULL NOTE OF PARAGRAPHS 41 AND 44 OF THE REPORT, MY GOVERNMENT ALSO VIEWS WITH CONCERN THE GROWING POLITICAL TURBULENCE AND ARMED DISSIDENCE IN THE SAHARAN REGION. THIS DISSIDENCE THREATENS THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF AFRICAN STATES IN THE REGION AND COULD FOSTER A CONFIDENTIAL

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POLARIZATION BETWEEN ARABS AND BLACK AFRICANS. FURTHERMORE WE AGREE THAT THIS SITUATION PROVIDES MOSCOW WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO INCREASE ITS INFLUENCE AND EVENTUALLY TO INTERVENE IN THE LONGER TERM.

IN ADDITION, THE UNITY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF OTHER FRAGILE NEIGHBORING AFRICAN NATIONS COULD ULTIMATELY BE UNDERMINED.

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--WITH RESPECT TO RHODESIA MY GOVERNMENT BELIEVES:  
(PLEASE PROVIDE UPDATE)

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--PARAGRAPH 27 OF THE REPORT ADDRESSES WESTERN EFFORTS ON NAMIBIA. THE UNITED STATES WILL CONTINUE TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THE UNITED NATIONS CONTACT GROUP ON NAMIBIA AND THE PARTIES PRINCIPALLY CONCERNED TO ESTABLISH A STABLE AND MODERATE REGIME WHICH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WOULD FULLY RECOGNIZE.

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--ADDRESSING THE SUBJECT OF APARTHEID TAKEN UP IN PARAS 21-23, MY GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO URGE THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA TO ALTER ITS RACIAL POLICIES AND THEREBY ACCORD TO NON-WHITES THE FULL MEASURE OF POLITICAL AND

ECONOMIC RIGHTS DUE TO THEM. IT IS OUR HOPE OF COURSE THAT  
DESPITE ITS PRESENT INTRANSIGENCE, THE GOVERNMENT IN  
PRETORIA ULTIMATELY WILL ACCOMODATE ITSELF TO INTERNATIONAL  
PUBLIC OPINION. END TEXT. BENNETT

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